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DESCRIPTION

# BIS-β-HYDROXYETHYL TEREPHTHALATE PRODUCTION PROCESS AND PURIFICATION PROCESS

This application is a divisional of US 09/622518 now US Patent 6,630,601, which is a 371 of PCT/JP99/07284 filed 12/24/1999

## Technical Field

The present invention relates to a process for producing bis-β-hydroxyethyl terephthalate and/or a low condensate thereof from an aromatic polyester and to a process for purifying bis-β-hydroxyethyl terephthalate or a low condensate thereof. More specifically, it relates to a process capable of producing bis-β-hydroxyethyl terephthalate and/or a low condensate thereof efficiently even from an recovered aromatic polyester and to a process capable of purifying bis-β-hydroxyethyl terephthalate and/or a low condensate thereof obtained by the above process, to a high level.

## Prior Art in the Technical Field

One of the characteristic features of aromatic polyesters is that they have excellent performance suitable for use in the field of a wide variety of molded products such as fibers, films or resins. Another characteristic feature of the aromatic polyesters is that it is relatively easy to return them to a raw material stage by depolymerization.

Aromatic polyesters, especially terephthalate-based polyesters centering on polyethylene terephthalate are widely used in the field of various molded products as described above. As means of producing an aromatic polyester, there is currently used a process comprising the steps of forming an intermediate containing bis-β-hydroxyethyl terephthalate by a direct esterification reaction between terephthalic acid and ethylene glycol or an ester exchange reaction between a lower alkyl ester of terephthalic acid, especially dimethyl terephthalate, and ethylene glycol and then, generally